

**AURORA, Colo.**—Today, U.S. Rep. Mike Coffman, R-Colo., announced that the Military Enlistment Opportunity Act is gaining support, with Democrat Luis Gutierrez of Illinois and Republicans David Valadao of California and Steve Stivers of Ohio signing on as cosponsors. The National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) also endorsed the measure today.

"I'm pleased to see that support is growing for this important national security measure," said Coffman, a Marine Corps combat veteran.

The Military Enlistment Opportunity Act, H.R. 435, which was introduced last week, broadens the pool of those eligible to enlist in the U.S. Armed Forces, beyond citizens and lawful permanent residents. The bill will allow persons who have resided continuously in the United States for at least two years, and those classified as Deferred Action Child Arrivals by the Department of Homeland Security, to enlist. The legislation also creates a path to citizenship for both categories through the current naturalization process already in place for military service. Citizenship will be revoked if the individual is either discharged under less than honorable conditions or does not fulfill a five year military obligation.

Retired Col. Peter J. Duffy, acting director of legislation for NGAUS, hailed Coffman's bill, saying—

"NGAUS strongly embraces this well crafted bill which provides the perfect avenue for an important segment of our immigrant population to acquire citizenship in the culture of vital service to our country."

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